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| 1WHOM DO YOU FEAR? PART II SERMON OUTLINE12/17/23 SELECTED SCRIPTURESINTRO: Betrand Russell, famous philosopher and athiest 1927 address “Why I Am Not A Christian” argued that religion/Christianity is primarily and mainly built upon fear. Believed religion was invented to cope with fears like fear of death, fear of the unknown, etc. He believed if you liberated people from belief in God = liberate them from fear In fact, opposite has happened. We live in anxiety and worry and fear like never before because we’ve lost what it means to “fear the Lord”  | 2It is precisely because we have abandoned the fear of the Lord that we become all the more fearful Liberating society from belief in God only results in tyranny, chaos, moral degeneration, and fearREVIEW: Last week fear of man why it’s sinful Fear of man = root issue of love/worship Last week needs today to complete it What does it mean to “fear the Lord?”Maybe you’re confused: You hear commands from Scripture to “not fear” but then also the command to fear the Lord You might also ask is “fear” the right word to use? “revere”? “respect”?“awe”?  |
| 3But “fear” is still best term to use despite baggage “revere” falls short = not overwhelmingly startingly reaction “respect” falls short = strange response to God’s love “awe” = better but still falls short because it’s usually in response to God’s transcendence and power, not His graciousness You will see that the term “fear of the Lord” is the best term to use Term = not punishment/condemnation This fear = wonderful, delightful, joyful fear = tremble at who God is and what He has done for you. To put it simply fear of the Lord = delight in the Lord TRANSITION: I want to show you that fearing the Lord consists of fearing Him as Creator and fearing Him as Redeemer and Father  | 41. Fearing the Lord means fearing Him as your Creator God = wholly other/transcendant You are creature/He is Creator David in contemplating this distinction said this Ps. 8:4 *“What is man that You remember him, And the son of man that You care for him?*When you consider majesty of God = staggering thought Illus: Space one planet out of 8 – one solar system out of 3916 – milky way galaxy out of 200 billion galaxies (conservative estimate) illus: Baby formation Heidi’s ultrasound: pebble ---- human w/arms + legs, |
| 5Ps. 139:13-14 “*For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.”*Only logical explanation for creation = one powerful Creator behind all of this If you personally encountered majesty of God = fall down as if dead like the apostle John in Revelation Isaiah 6? *“woe is me, for I am undone!”*Lit. felt body was going to explode into million pieces Judg. 13 Manoah found out and told his wife *“We will surely die; for we have seen God”* | 6Not to fear God = foolishness because animals naturally fear humansYet Ecc. 3:14 *“God has so worked that men should fear Him”*Part of this “working” through creation Because creation clearly testifies to splendor of God, rejecting it consequences are dire Romans 1:18-20 *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, both His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”* |
| 7Consequences for “suppressing the truth in unrighteousness” = giving sinners over to fornication, homosexuality and like sins, and a debased mind that produces all sorts of evil Fear of the Lord as Creator ultimately humbles you and acts as divine axe to chop down your pride Because you see you are like grasshopper in God’s sightJob was hit with magnitude of God as Creator in Job 42 and said now that my eye has seen you *“I reject myself and repent in dust and ashes”*For unbeliever to encounter God as Creator of the universe = terrifying thing Like Rev. 6 mountains and rocks to fall on them to hide them from *“the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.”* | 8Instead of fleeing from presence of God, believers fall down in worship in presence of God in worshipful adoration TRANSITION: Now to fear the Lord only because He is your Creator will only keep you face-down prostrate before Him You must be lifted up to delight in Him as your redeemer. That’s why you need to not only fear the Lord as Creator but also as your redeemer and Father 2. Fearing the Lord means fearing Him as your Redeemer and Father To have fear of the Lord as Creator and not redeemer = similar to demon’s knowledge Jm. 2:19 They know that God is one = shudder They can’t believer Without knowledge of God as your redeemer = only left with dread at the end |
| 9Not only = slave but also = friend Not friend as you are equal to God, He’s still your Creator and master but like a friend He reveals things to only His most intimate relationships Jn. 14:21 ***“****He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”*When you come to know: love of God through redemptive work of Jesus Christ Adopted by God into His family Showered you with His blessingsYour fear of Him is not punishment but a fear of offending His honor and glory Illus: Like someone you know and respect: best friend | 10Best friend loves you and you love best friend Relationship = trust and intimacy If you sin against him, you know he will always forgive you and love you Because of that: You fear offending him in and losing his trust by sinning It’s like that with God Our relationship with God = not like eggshells and then wrath Fear = offending Him because He is so good to you That’s what it’s like to know God as redeemerFamilial relationship = son/father “Abba/Father!” |
| 11When you sin against God, you don’t fear ultimate separation like unbeliever but fear that sin you committed might distant you from his warmth of enjoyed communion with God Illus: Parents will always love you no matter what, but doesn’t mean there won’t be breaches in trust and closeness Spurgeon: “Holy fear leads us to dread anything which might cause our Father’s displeasure.” John Calvin:“Even if there was no hell, a sanctified fear would still shudder at offending him alone!”Not enough to evict fear of man from your heart He will only creep back in as long as there is roomLike all other sins, it is not enough to just put off old man and put on the new man  | 12Truth clearly seen = Ephesians 4:28 “*He who steals must steal no longer* (putting off sin); *but rather he must labor, performing with is own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need* (putting on righteousness).”If you have fear of man dwelling inside your heart, no room for fear of manFear of the Lord is cure for the fear of man So….How do you *grow* in your fear of the Lord? Start by recognizing that He is so good to you: Jer. 33 |
| 13*“And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned against Me and by which they have transgressed against Me. And it will be to Me a name of joy, praise, and beauty before all the nations of the earth which will hear of all the good that I do for them, and they will be in dread and tremble because of all the good and all the peace that I make for it.”*Impossible in old covenant system = permanently atone for sin Impossible to make sinner completely clean before Lord Constant atonement/Constant washing Yet God spoke of day when they would no longer have to do that He Himself will atone for them and cleanse them Act of incredible mercy and grace: permanent solution  | 14In response, the redeemed will fear and tremble *because* of all the good that God will do for them. He could have left you in your filth and sin, but He didn’tFear/goodness side by side Hos. 3:5 “*Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek Yahweh their God and David their king; and they will come in dread to Yahweh and to His goodness in the last days.”*Gen. 28:10-17 God confirms covenant with Jacob in dream Reassure bless and increase Jacob To never leave him/always present fulfill good purposes  |
| 15In response: *“Surely Yahweh is in this place, and I did not know it.” And he was afraid and said, “How fearsome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”*Use of word fear is not negative type of fear but positive = overwhelmed by goodness of God Not God’s people fear Him = God saves them = Then we don’t fear Him God saves us *in order that* we fear HimAnother way you grow in fear of the Lord is to know how much God loves you Essence fear of the Lord = love Ps. 145:19-20 “*He will work out the desire of those who fear Him; He will hear their cry for help and He will save them. Yahweh keeps all who love Him, But all the wicked He will destroy.”* | 16Even Shema, the greatest commandment Deut. 6 to “love the Lord” is preceded by command to “fear the Lord” *“Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments, which Yahweh your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do it in the land where you are going over to possess it, so that you and your son and your grandson might fear Yahweh your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I am commanding you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.”*But you might miss this connection because you may have misconstrued notion of what “love” is Illus: “love” is thrown aroundI “love” chocolate. I “love” my car = nothing more than preferenceBut nature of love = defined by object |
| 171. I love my cat 2. I love my wife 3. I love my God All three = true statements But different type of love for each Seriously wrong if the level of love I had for God is same as my cat or even my wife and vice versa Delight and love that you should have for God should be a trembling delight Nehemiah 1:11*“O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your slave and the prayer of Your slaves who delight to fear Your name.”*God’s love transcends all other loves 1 John 3:1 *“See how great a love the Father has given to us, that we would be called children of God; and we are.”* | 18It can be struggle to imagine greater love than love for spouse But Jesus said Matt. 10:37 *“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.”*Or to see it from the opposite angle, Jesus said in Luke 14:26, *“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.”*Jesus requiring this type of love because only proper response to such an amazing love That’s why each of those words, “respect, reverence, and awe” just don’t quite fit the response that we should have towards God’s love  |
| 19To encounter living God in all His glory and goodness = we cannot contain ourselves God is too beautiful and too glorious for our hearts to not respond in passionate delight Fearing the Lord = isn’t about punishment or dread of someone more powerful than us But if you are listening today and not have repented of your sins, trusted in Jesus as Lord and Savior, God will be to you = dreadful judge If Jesus has not taken wrath for your sins on crossthen you will have to pay for your sins Hebrews: Without faith, it is impossible to please God Without Jesus’ death, there is no access to divine mercy-seat | 20You should be afraid of dying in your sins You should be afraid of flames of hell lick you up in hell forever in torment God has given you a conscience to know right from wrong so that every time you sin, you fear consequences not from police, but from greatest judge over heaven and earth But more you sin over time, more you suffocate your conscience to point where conscience vanishes Turn to the Lord while conscience is still soft Listen to your conscience pointing out your sins Prov. 16:6 *“By the fear of the Lord one turns away from evil”*Only at cross you see terrible extent of your sins and awesome magnitude of God’s love for you  |
| 21When you come to realize love of God despite Him being a holy Godonly right response to His love = tremble before Him “Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Oh, were you there when they crucified my Lord? Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble” Were you there when they crucified my Lord?Pray  | 22 |